

Meeting on 13.3.19 with Shropshire Council to discuss the situation regarding the Recreation Ground Toilet Block

Present Jane Kenyon, Chris Mellings, Nigel Billingham, Penny O'Hagan

A site meeting took place to view the inside of the old toilet block which was found to be in good condition especially as the building had not been used for over 10 years. Following the inspection a number of items were raised.

Ownership

This still needs to be clarified however all present felt it would be better to work collaboratively to find a solution to this problem rather than spending time debating who is the true owner of the building. The Town Council's stance remains that whilst they own the freehold of the land on which the toilet block stands they are not and have never been responsible for the building itself which has always been under the responsibility of North Shropshire DC and subsequently Shropshire Council .

Future of the building

The Town Clerk raised the issue that leaving the building empty in its current form was not an option as the building was attracting anti social behaviour and a decision needs to be made on the future of the building A discussion took place regarding the options for the future of the toilet block which were as follows

1. Removal of the building – This would be a worst case scenario. As the Town Council's stance is that the building is owned by Shropshire Council regardless of the Town Council holding the freehold of the site the costs of demolition will have to be met by Shropshire Council and these costs may be better spent on providing support to the Town Council to reopen the building

2. Sale of the building - This would need to be pursued by Shropshire Council however before a sale can proceed a check will need to be carried out with regard to any covenants being on the land as this could impact on any sale. Also if the building is sold there is a risk that it may not be developed and could deteriorate further

3 Reopening of the building by the Town Council as a seasonal toilet block – It was agreed that the Clerk would suggest to the Town Council that this would be an option worth exploring and it would be discussed at the March meeting of the town Council. If Town Councillors wished to pursue this option, then the Clerk would be able to identify costs of seasonal opening of the block however it should be noted that cleaning costs are just part of the expenditure and that other costs that need to be accounted for include

Running Costs to be considered include

Electrical surveys- 3 year

Insurance

Rates

Cleaning (including provision of consumables)

Installation of coin boxes and charging mechanism

Utility charges

Maintenance charges

Funding

It was pointed out that no provision had been made in the Town Council's 2019-20 budget for this work and it was asked whether Shropshire Council would be able to provide any contribution towards the building as it had done with the car park toilet block

Recommended Action Plan

Shropshire Council - to request that Property Services Group carry out and pay for a full structural survey of the building including a survey of all drains

Town Council - to consider at the March meeting of the Council whether to carry out a due diligence exercise into the cost of re opening the toilets on a seasonal basis